

FEATS OF THE AGED

More than thirty years had turned their backs upon Bacon and Leibnitz and Locke, more than seventy upon Kant and Reid, when their most memorial writings were begun. But these were philosophers. I will remember, then, that the sun of more than three score summers was shining, of more than three score winters was falling, upon a sunrise and the great regard to the past—the sacred epic of our language and of modern times spring to light. St. Augustine revised for circulation the works that amaze modern scholarship with the profound and intricate of their subjects and the huge valiance of their erudition. The great Augustine, the great Cassiodorus, the statesman before he became a monk, was ninety-three. About his favorite study of Language found him still enamored with his pen. The most learned of Romans, Varro, was a septuagenarian when he wrote his

ated to Buchanan, his wife, at whose instance it was composed. The most illustrious scourger of Rome, however, was not yet little, when

tionally, generally, and in the most direct and efficient manner, they showed that nothing of the former vigor or skill was lost. Strabo, the prince of Grecian geographers, was still further advanced when his folios were first taken in hand. Aristotolus, one of the generals of Alexander the Great, made it the amusement of his eighty-fourth year to write the history of his own times. The Greek historian, looking cheerfully upon his books of the Laws, as a period of life when the nineteenth Psalm, if he could have read it, in its untranslated Hebrew, would have painted its grim text at him but in vain. Sophocles, the warrior-dramatist wrote his "Epipnus at Colonus" at the age of ninety; and the critics who find in some of the tragi-comic plays of the Greek dramatists a connection between a palace and a cottage scene, and between the Theban hero himself in his martial and his secluded days. There is nothing in the piece that is unworthy of its authors fame. Isocrates, Milton's "old man eloquent," squandered almost his age and kept his reputation to the last. At the age of eighty-two he composed the great oration in which he commended his profession against the aspersions of Plato. Then there was Theophrastus the disciple, friend and successor of "the mighty Socrates," to whom that most really philosophic mind of the Grecian world committed his writings. He was a scholar and a teacher, and something better than that; a man of great intellect and a man of great heart. He lived to the age further advanced than can be soberly believed in; and when he left the world, it was not as if delivered from a prison, but taking a reluctant farewell of the light. He died with nature. Cicero tells us, that she should have a protracted existence upon the stage and crew, who did not need, and withhold the life of the world. He complained that he was just beginning to see things as they were, he should be "extinguished." Doubtless

doubtless he was in error when he supposed that human improvement would be advanced by the

further extension of the term of human life. But who can explain the courageous manhood of those who have died for such a cause as this? And who will refuse to bless that nature with which he found fault, that she has made it possible to carry-over poor faculties here on earth so far and so well?

Examples such as now come to my mind might be multiplied to almost any extent, by those who would make this subject one of special research. I have no purpose in pursuing it even *as far* as this, but to re-assert an animating lesson against the desponding thoughts that tempt men to give over to fate, and to allow that some men have permitted time to be so recklessly and so needlessly to be checked, and keep them looking back, and hanging back, instead of going on, with their faces forward, and their feet in the path, all they stand and in their lot—aye, and stand steadfast, too—all the end of their days.—*Christian Examiner*.

"THE PUBLIC LANDS"

"The disposal of the public lands of the country seems to be the great trouble with which our law makers are afflicted. Plans without number have been proposed, and to all the eyes of the thoughtful are recreated which need not be repeated fast enough. One way seems to be very popular—the grant of lands for railroad purposes. There are thousands and one of these projects before Congress, and are to be carried through, if they are not rejected. The project is, 'you help me, and I will help you.' Some member has proposed to have a law enacted to have a

files his paper towels, etc., before the House, and by the help of a crowd of hungry leeches like

himself, he intends to carry it, paying for the favor by voting for every project his "chelliers" may favor. "I am not," he directed me, "in a position to be spent, and but little hope can be entertained that anything really beneficial will be done."

"The friends of the homestead bill are sanguine that they will be able to carry it, though the House is not in a position to vote. The conduct of measures have been hot in the Senate, it is feared will swamp it."

"The great working millions of this republic have long enough been victimized by patriotism, and it is time they had learned to distrust it. They are now being deceived with phantoms of trust and honor. There is no real hope for the worker, until his rights to the soil are recognized as clearly and as fully as his political rights. Land, not money, is the great desideratum. Every man's right is just as near to the one as to the other. Land honestly is the life of the people of capital—divest it of this, and the great element of labor at once assumes its proper sphere and position."

"The first great step in land reform, was made by our fathers, when they cut off the laws of primogeniture and entailment of estates, and the work by them so nobly commenced, should be completed by a limitation as to quantity."

"The homestead strikes well by migrations within a few years, and the lines of railway penetrating all parts of the mighty west, have given a new

spirit of speculation. Every soldier-project which has ever been before Congress, has met with favor,

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